

After the Manifesto

Creative Thesis

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by

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Charger 11

Eight years' dust I brush away,
dead cells, dander, bug decay,
oiling hinges down the line,
helping frozen keys unbind,
resurrecting dry black ink,
letters, numbers needing drink,
cooing like a doting mother,
how I love my little Brother!

Broken Portal

I would not change.

The dying, the living, leaves on trees,

Life carried on without me.

Clinging to you, while transcending space and time...

The dying, the living, leaves on trees

Coming to, and being shocked by the whole of it.

Clinging to you, while transcending space and time...

But going nowhere.

Coming to, and being shocked by the whole of it,

When you walked out the door, I locked it.

But, going nowhere,

You weren't the same anyway.

You walked out the door, and I locked it.

But I still would not change.

And you weren't the same, anyway.

Life carries on without me.

Nice to See You Again

How long has it been? About 2,763 days...

But who's counting? Am I still banned,

From the time you made a point to seize

My will, and on my finger put a ring,

Then ran, and left me as prey

For broken halos on winged feet?

For to woo me was no simple feat!

When I think about those carefree days—

Then, I *never* turned my head to God to pray—

Always laughing, playing with a band...

And I *never* let my hands wring,

Knowing there were *so many* fish in the seas.

Wrapping my mind around what my heart sees,

And so, swept swiftly off my feet,

Crashing, searing, a flaming ring,

Ablaze! For five fiery days...

You introduced me to the band,

And you led me to your place to pray.

You lost me there, and turned your head to God to pray—
In the dusk, in the dust in the juniper trees,
Coming back, to find a bond and future leaving banned.
To keep such a vow would be no easy feat,
For someone like me—my life, in a daze,
Upon me a spell, on my finger a ring.

And when suddenly you were gone, my hands *did* wring,
And my head *did* turn to God and pray.
I would count the tears and heartbeats and days...
Willing you to come from across the seas
With happy eyes and dancing feet,
The leader of my band.

Eyelashes flutter, soul window's shuttered with permanence... *banned*.
But as sure as the blanket shrouds the hands you wring—
It isn't long enough to cover the shuffle of nervous feet.
In a crowd of wolves, he left you as prey—
But this moment to pounce, I fail to seize
And save for the next life's rainy days.

Five happy days steeping in eternity since I was banned.

Across nine years and seven seas I hear your voice still ring,

Turn my head to God to pray, keep wringing hands and feet.

Contents, Honda Civic EX

Pockets stuffed with empty packs,
Empty bottle, paper sacks,
Fliers from a solo show,
Small rock chips in the window,
Clods from footsteps, flowers, fake,
A 5-in-1 and Linda's rake,
Dried blooms, a bed for Red Tail's wing,
Far brighter than they were in Spring

Pardon My Heritage

Limericks are wonderful
Until they're torn asunder-ful
As long as they're funny,
Or clever or punny,
Who cares if they're blunder-ful?

An At-Risk Youth Comes of Age

She came on board in saddle shoes
An at-risk youth with at-risk blues
From schoolyard games she'd left behind
For hypodermic peace of mind
Her crayon colors, long forgotten
She traded in for Oxycontin
And sailed away hoping to score
But shipwrecked on an empty shore

Memory Lane

I took a day trip to Memory Lane

Memory Lane

is always the same

a six-pack of sisters

playing mind games

socking each other

and shuffling blame

red hot anger flames

fanning fires

with

me

in the

middle

just like old times

trapped between lunatics

vibrating with deep-seated fear

and the adrenaline rush of a

rabid sibling rivalry.

We went pedal to metal on Memory Lane, and

Memory Lane is always the same,

And it was just like old times.

From terror to envy

in 5 seconds flat,

eating up highway,

that wood-paneled land yacht,

with death threats from Dad

and Mom retching

straight out the window.

Running on empty on Memory Lane,

Memory Lane

will not be the same

At first they were nine,

and then they were eight,

left in a waking nightmare

and the aftermath of

shattered illusions

about miraculous survival,

death had its way

and Memory lane

has fallen to shame,

with no one left

except those

silently wishing

to be next

Mixed Emotions at a Graveside

Now we lay you down to sleep,
We pray the Lord your soul to keep
But I think we all know that isn't likely to happen.

Part of me, detached and free,
Hovers above this spectacle
And watches me carry the flag.
The one I wrote about,
Spoke out about,
When I was young
And in front of City Council
And God and everybody.
Except for you,
Who I hadn't seen in years.

And this flag,
Perfect little triangle that it is,
Is still trite, all the same,
And at best a momento
From someone else's more honorable deeds.
But not yours.

Here, at this military service,
Puny and insignificant next to my brother,
The *real* soldier,
Feeling like a hypocrite

And wondering if anyone else even
Remembers that speech.
Or, that
I got kicked out of the military.

Here, where Father What's-His-Name
Seems more moved than anyone
By his own service
For this old man, dead man, bad man,
A pile of benign ashes
That shouldn't be able to
Hurt anyone anymore,
But still does.
And part of me stops
The rest from sobbing
To wonder if he's the same priest
Who came to counsel all those times
You tried to kill Mom
Or she tried to kill you
Or you both tried to kill your children,
And then he did nothing
But bow his head to
Shield his eyes from the
Horrors before him.

And I think he's a hypocrite.
And I think you were a hypocrite, too.

So I raise my head
And mouth the words to a prayer
I always thought was bullshit,
Even in baby teeth.
I say “Rest in Peace,”
While I’m thinking
“Rot in Hell,”
And take one last
Look around at the mourners.
Your mourners—
More than I expected and
More than we all secretly think you deserve.

After the Manifesto

America just grabbed
her own pussy
but has the nerve
to cry out in protest
America I've been living
paycheck to paycheck
since I was seven
but now
I'm unemployable and
\$52,368 in debt.
you do the math
America, I overthink everything to the point of exhaustion
and yet
I come to no conclusions,
and,
you're poisoning everyone
and making it
almost impossible
to be part of the solution

Your churches
are full of hypocrites
who buy absolution on the cheap
and burn rubber
out of the parking lot
in shiny death machines

to spend the rest of the day
ignoring their families.

*We're counting down the
final seconds and--*

UNBELIEVABLE!

LET'S SEE THAT IN AN
INSTANT REPLAY!

America, let's not.

Every. Day. Is. Game. Day.

Pre-game, post-game,

halftime tantrums,

highlights and

screaming at a deaf TV

No, I did not see that play,

and,

America,

I have not seen the fucking remote.

America, your feminist Nazi principles

are chewing the balls

off some of your best men

and asking for seconds,

and sometimes

your fight for equality

looks a lot like revenge.

Or fascism.

Your last President

won the Nobel Peace Prize

and then he bombed the shit
out of practically everyone
for two terms straight and, America,
you know what you did.

*"Ashes Found in Statue's Lap
after Woman Self-Immolates
at the Lincoln Memorial in Protest"*

Hey, America--
Sometimes you make me want to set myself on fire too.
I signed away my life for you
and in return
you told me I was a narcissist
and then locked me up in a mental hospital.
America, you know
you've won
when there are no
protests on
college campuses
when no one
cares less than
late model kids in
late model cars
God is dead and
Ginsberg is dead
and all the best minds
are lobotomized
and there is no one left to howl

and no one around to hear them
when all that's left
lies discarded and crumpled in a heap on the floor.
An echo in an empty room,
a full ashtray and an empty glass,
whitish crescents ripped and spitted,
dried drops of blood from the last resistance,
furious scrawlings on the walls
and in notebooks enroute to nowhere
and all those other remnants that crazed minds leave behind
are all that ever remains
after the manifesto

The Nights I Drank Too Much, Too Fast

When we went to Cedar Point
I lost it on a ride,
And then I lost it during lunch,
And tried my best to hide,
One time I chugged a lot of beer,
Two hours before noon,
One time I barfed inside your car,
At Burning Man, in June.
Some nights I drank too much, too fast,
And boy, my head was spinning!
One time I ate a bad hot dog,
Before the seventh inning.
And once I mixed a bunch of meds,
Just made it to the door,
Then lost it on the sidewalk,
Wiped my mouth, and ordered more.

And then there was this one time I drank 9 Vanilla Stoli Smith & Wessons at a company Christmas party on an empty stomach and then blacked out on 5th Avenue and woke up in a clawfoot tub covered in vomit and something that vaguely resembled julienned carrots that no one could explain, and nothing could be done about the smell left in the hallway carpet and we almost got evicted...

That time I thought “NEVER AGAIN!”

For *years* I was afflicted!

Admittedly, I drank too much,

But oh, how far I’ve come-mach

I look back now and wonder how

I’m left with any stom-ach!

THANK YOU

A Graduating Student's Lament
of a
Heavily Flawed Public Education System
and also
the
Looming Mountain of Recently-Acquired
Financial Obligations
Necessary to Reverse
the Perverse Teachings of Said System
(*or Countdown to Forbearance*)

For thirteen years I swallowed lies,
While never feeling full.
Thirteen years of crap for free--
A gratis load of bull!

Then I began this journey called
"The Path of Higher Learning."
I came to quench the thirst for truth
That kept my conscience yearning,

And found some truth between the lines,
(With help and on my own),
But not without acquiring
A heap of student loans!

And as I leave these hallowed halls,
So soon to be deported,
I start to get the feeling that
I've somehow been extorted.

I'm thankful for the things I've learned,

The truth I now can see,

But is it worth this crushing debt

To have what should be free?

Burying the Past

One late Summer day
We laid you to rest
Cigarette ashes
Mixed with asbestos
And all your kids raised
Their glass for a toast
To honor the asshole
They should hate the most
And pray to the Lord
Your soul for to save
And bury the past
In a freshly packed grave
But I think I speak
For the bulk of the lot
When I say I've got plans
To piss on the plot!

Yet to Come

Have you heard the news today?
They say that freedom's giving way,
And the worst is yet to come, I fear
The worst is yet to come.
What's the point of history,
If it's lessons don't apply to me?
The worst is yet to come, my friend,
The worst is yet to come.
Privacy has been repealed,
There're big ears in your cornfield, and
The worst is yet to come, I bet,
The worst is yet to come.
Lack of foresight brings remorse--
Don't believe me, ask a Norse!
And the worst is yet to come, I know,
The worst is yet to come.
Have you heard the latest word?
Dying bees and falling birds,
"The worst is yet to come," they sang,
"The worst is yet to come!"
Ones that used to flutter by
Have vanished with the butterflies.
The worst is yet to come, I swear,
The worst is yet to come.
So all you history-phobic yeomen,
Take some pointers from a Roman, who'll say,

“The worst is yet to come, old boy,”

The worst is yet to come.”

Hubris, peaking, tends to be

The downfall of society!

And the worst is yet to come, oh yes!

The worst is yet to come.

History will be repeated,

Even if, this time, it's Tweeted,

#TheWorstIsYetToCome--*you'll see!*

#TheWorstIsYetToCome!

Snubbed

These hot iron rails

Took Jack and Allen And Bill

But I'm still on foot

Welcome to Scenic Ohio

<https://vimeo.com/195483225>